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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Results of questionnaire study examining student body with respect to: Enrollment, age, sex, curriculum preference, race, religion, politics, birthplace, community, family, parental backgrounds, economic status, commuting to college, finances, student employment, and leisure activity. Study showed that expansion of numbers was not accompanied by significant changes in social composition of student population.

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Newark State Col

NEW JERSEY
STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
NEWARK

SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE CLASS OF 1961

Reported by Dr. John C. Hutchinson Jr. Dec 27, 1957

As an annual report and the last in a particular series, this study is complete in itself but may prove more useful to those considering it against the background of previous reports. During the current academic year a summary report of social data for the classes of 1954-1961, inclusive, will be made in which comparisons will be drawn and trends and base lines established for future inventories and analyses.

Size, Age, Sex

While the official figure for freshman enrollment is somewhat higher, 330 students completed the census questionnaire in mid-September, an increase of thirty-eight per cent over the comparable number in the class of 1960.

Seventy-five per cent of the freshman class is eighteen years of age. No changes in age distribution in this class have been detected.

Of the 330 freshmen accounted for, 268 are women and sixty-two are men, almost the same ratio as was found in last year's freshman class.

Curriculum Preference

Newark State persists in its General Elementary specialty, for 182 of the 330 freshmen (fifty-five per cent) indicated a preference for that major. Other curriculum choices range downward from the 67 in Early Childhood, 38 in Junior High, 12 in the two secondary specialties, 12 in Special Education, 11 in Industrial Arts to 8 in Fine Arts. Curriculum elections in the beginning of the freshman year are rather tentative, experience suggests.

Race, Religion and Politics

The twenty-nine Negro students in the class of 1961 constitute not quite ten per cent of the total.

Practically the whole class accounted for its religious affiliations, grouped as follows: fifty-one per cent Roman Catholic, thirty per cent Protestant, nineteen per cent Hebrew. While 166 of the freshmen students are Catholic, only fifty-four attended parochial high school.

In politics, 146 of the class count themselves as Democrats, 113 are Republicans, 16 indicated independence, with 55 silent on their party choice.

Birthplace, Community, Family

Newark State freshmen are predominantly New Jersey-born (80%) with almost two-thirds of this group born in Essex County. The class of 1961 contains just fifty-seven individuals born outside of the state but within the United States, and nine born abroad.

In community backgrounds, the small town is definitely in eclipse. Twenty-one per cent of the class come from towns under 15,000 population; thirty-seven per cent

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live in medium-sized towns (15,000--100,000); and the remaining forty-two per cent reside in big cities (over 100,000) like Newark and Elizabeth.

For the present, at least, the vast majority of freshmen remain single. Married freshmen are rare, only twenty out of 330, and these are almost invariably "over-age" - older than nineteen. Half of the married freshmen have children.

In family size, Newark State freshmen this year are distributed as follows: only child, 37; student plus one sibling, 136; student plus two, 73; student plus three, 46; student plus four, 13. Twenty-five of the frehsmen come from families of six or more children.

The Fathers of the Members of the Class of 1961

Birthplace; New Jersey, 45%, other U. S., 31%; foreign-born, 24%.

Schooling: elementary 20%, junior high, 17%, high school, 37%, studied beyond the high school, 10%; college graduates, 16%.

Occupations: 66 fathers reported in business, 35 in professional work (including 13 teachers), 136 in skilled labor, 29 in unskilled. Scattered numbers of the fathers are government-employed or unemployed or retired, with three identified as farmers.

The vast majority of the fathers of freshmen are employees; only fifteen per cent are reported to be self-employed.

The Mothers of Freshmen

Birthplace: New Jersey, 48%, other U. S., 34 %, foreign-born, 18%.

Schooling: elementary, 20%, junior high, 17%, senior high, 49%; with the remaining fourteen per cent almost equally divided between post-high school studies and college graduation.

Close to seventy per cent of the mothers of freshmen are home-makers this year. The remainder, beyond the home functions, are employed principally in business (46) and industry (29). Eight of the mothers are teaching.

Before marriage, the mothers were distributed in the following occupational groupings: business, 93, professional, 20 (including 12 teachers); skilled work, 26; unskilled, 39; sales, 23.

Economic Status

Half of the freshmen reporting indicated their family income class, with overall results as follows:

Under $3000 per year	16 students
$3000 - 4900	52
5000 - 7000	67
Over $7000 per year	28
Total	163 students

These data provide little basis for generalization beyond the fact that, as against other years, the class of '61 appears to be drawn from almost the same income levels from which former Newark State classes were drawn. Since half the class chose not to state family income, and since some of the incomes reported involved more than one wage-earner, precise characterizations of income status are difficult to draw.

Less than ten per cent of the freshmen report that their families owned no automobile. Both the telephone and the television set are universally owned.

Sixty-five per cent of the family homes are owned; thirty-five per cent are rented.

Commuting to College

One hundred and four students live within five miles of Broadway and Fourth Avenue; 104 students live within the five-to-nine-mile zone; fifty-five live between ten and fourteen miles from college; and sixty-five must travel fifteen miles or more to make their morning class.

Bus transportation is the principal means of travel for 157 freshmen; 137 commute by automobile; thirty-one use the train; and this year just six students walk to college.

Finances

One hundred and fifty of the 330 students reporting depend on their parents for financial support in college; 111 said they were self-supporting; and forty-three depend on a combination of their own and their parents' resources.

Thirty-six students, just over ten per cent, attend college on scholarships. Seven of the wives mention their husbands as financing their education; one rather frank husband revealed his wife as his principal means of support. Twelve freshmen study under the provisions of the G. I. bill.

Student Employment

As of mid-September 1957, twenty freshmen worked under ten hours a week; thirty-six were employed from ten through nineteen hours; fifteen were on the job 20-29 hours; and thirteen reported working over thirty hours a week. Sales and clerical lines predominated.

Leisure-time Activity

The most popular form of leisure-time activity among the freshmen is reading (169 choices), with sports holding the interest of 123 individuals and music 83 and dancing 55. Fifty of the women sew and knit. Dating was mentioned by twenty-three, but no doubt overlooked by many others. Perhaps there are women students who consider finding a husband more work then recreation.

Conclusion

In no measurable respect is this large class of 1961 different from the smaller classes received in the college over the past seven Septembers. Expansion of numbers has not brought with it significant changes in the social composition of the student population, as revealed in this series of census studies. The class of 1961 possesses all of the well-defined socio-economic characteristics of the seven previous classes.

Will a much larger, more diversified and newly located and housed college draw upon a different sector of the state's population in years to come? That remains to be seen.

John C. Hutchinson
December 27, 1957